

[Floor debate on HB 1978](#), the supplemental transportation “stimulus” budget bill, 3/4/2009

Rep. Glenn Anderson: (Start time 50:45): Thank you, Mister Speaker. I as well will be encouraging a “no” vote today, and I do so having been a long-time supporter of transportation infrastructure and investment. I’ve taken those votes; they have not been easy votes. As a matter of fact, they have been particularly painful votes. But, infrastructure truly is the anchor around a great deal of economic development occurs. We all agree with that and we all have good stories to show where it happens.

However today, we are about spending money – other people’s money; [and] the federal government’s money. And the undertone to the debate so far would leave one to believe there is no cost to that. It’s free money from heaven. Thank goodness we have free money from heaven so we can deal with some of these transportation projects. It is not free money. It is borrowed from China. That’s where it’s coming from. And, we are providing economic stimulus packages at the federal level – bailout after bailout after bailout. We’re bailing out the banks. We’re bailing out the insurance companies. We’re bailing out the automobile makers; Bailing out the states; Bailing out the local governments. The only people we’re not bailing out is the average citizen and the middle class who...(gavel)

Speaker Pro Tem Moeller: For what reason does the representative stand?

Democrat Representative: I rise to get an opinion on whether the debate about federal bailouts is pertinent to our stimulus transportation supplemental budget bill in front of us. It seems to me they are not attached.

Speaker Pro Tem Moeller: (start time 52:43) Representative, the title of the bill is “concerning economic stimulus in transportation funding and appropriations.” The point is well taken. Please continue.

Rep. Glenn Anderson: Thank you, Mister Speaker. I’m sure all those other parties enjoy their stimulus as well. This money is not free. There is a cost to it that we will pay for. Our federal government has provided funds from money they do not have, [that is] borrowed from foreign nations so we can take projects home. Most of them [are] probably really good things but, our country is in deep trouble; deep economic trouble [and] deep financial trouble. And, there is no lifeboat that’s handy. If this institution is willing to validate sending federal money that we don’t have and that we borrow and [will] continue to borrow for the next decade by the admission of administration in D.C. to pay for our stimulus package, are we doing our constituents a favor? I would encourage a “no” vote because we get to be citizen legislators. I get to wear my citizen hat at this moment. I see our country deeply in trouble and I see a government trying to take us back to where we were; substituting their credit card for our credit card that no longer works. I want to go forward. I don’t want to spend trillions of dollars going backwards. I would encourage the body to vote “no”...(gavel)

Speaker Pro Tem Moeller: For what reason does the member stand?

Rep. Zack Hudgins: I rise for the same point of order. The bill before us, I believe is three hundred, forty-one million dollars for transportation projects in Washington state, not trillions of dollars at the federal level.

Speaker Pro Tem Moeller: The speaker would like to remind the representative to keep his remarks to the bill before us. Your point is well taken, thank you.

Rep. Marko Liias: (starts at 55:00) Thank you, Mister Speaker. And, as I've listened to the debate this morning there is no question that our economy is suffering. There is no question that the families across the state of Washington are in a period of trouble; a period of question. We don't know what the future will hold for our state. We don't know what the future will hold for our country. One thing is clear, this problem did not begin in the state of Washington and we are suffering for the decisions that were made elsewhere, both worldwide and other parts of this country.

So that is where this recovery package that our president and our Congress, in a bipartisan fashion, have so graciously provided funding to the state of Washington to begin tackling the challenge we have here inside Washington.

The second thing that is important to remember about this bill is that it is the supplemental transportation budget for the end of this biennium. The supplemental that is included in this bill makes adjustments for the unexpected costs of our winter storms this year and for the increasing price of fuel in our ferries. It also accounts for savings we've achieved at the State Patrol and at the Department of Licensing through hiring freezes and other efficiency measures.

Again, just like we did with the early action savings bill earlier this session, we are approving a transportation supplemental budget earlier than before. We're balancing the budget and we're moving forward. In addition to the supplemental, which is a wise investment and a wise move for our state, it also includes three hundred and forty-some million dollars for projects across the state of Washington. My own county, there's projects on I-5 on Highway 532. There [are] projects on U.S. 2, which we know is one of the least safe roads and most dangerous roads in the state, if not the country. There's also funding for projects throughout the Puget Sound Region. There [are] projects funded throughout the state, in fact the project I'm probably most excited about is the work we are going to be doing on I-90. Fifty-five million dollars in deferred maintenance that will take this major east-west route; this route that connects the Western part of the state with our agriculture and our valuable industry on the Eastern side of the state and improve that road. We saw this winter how devastating it can be when I-90 is not functional. This bill will make investments in that critical east-west corridor uniting our state.

The thing I am most excited about is this isn't the only package of recovery funding that's coming. The good lady from the 36th talked about the equal amount of funding, equal to the amount we're spending today on state projects, that coming to our local governments and our transit agencies. This is a massive investment in our state's economy.

Our state's share, the three hundred and forty million dollars means 6,500 jobs - sixty-five hundred construction jobs for the people of Washington. Moody's tells us when you actually invest in infrastructure; it has a multiplier effect – 1.5 times the multiplier effect. That's 10,000 jobs just from the state's share. And if you look at the local share, which is equal to another 10,000 jobs, that's 20,000 jobs in our communities that are suffering; people in our communities that need help.

It's not just the construction jobs, Mister Speaker. It's the grocers, the accountants, it's the construction workers and their families, it's even the early childhood educators that are educating the kids of these construction workers and others that are involved in this piece of legislation.

Mister Speaker, as I've looked back at history, I've wondered how our country has confronted economic struggles before. How people like FDR were able to summon the courage to work through those difficult times ... *(gavel)*

Speaker Pro Tem Moeller: (start time 58:40) For what reason does the representative stand?

Rep. Glenn Anderson: Thank you, Mister Speaker. We've already determined by a previous ruling at the rostrum that talking about the federal government is out of line in our debate.

PAUSE

Speaker Pro Tem Moeller: (start time 59:21) Representative Anderson, on further reflection from the rostrum, I would, um, would rule that there is a connection between the Congressional action and the policy being debated here today. *(pause)* And I apologize for ruling you out of order previously. You may speak again if you so choose.

End 1:00